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*L'Année Psychologique*, publiée par ALFRED BINET. Dixième Année. Masson et Cie., Paris, 1904. pp. 680. 15 francs.

This tenth volume of the *Année* contains a happy innovation, namely, a collection of annual reviews, quite detailed and critical, upon the following special topics: the physiology of the nervous system, its histology, its mental pathology, normal and abnormal pedagogy, normal and criminal anthropology, philosophy, sociology, etc. Among the subjects treated are a psychological portrait of Paul Hervieu, the dramatic author; a curious study of control under the revelations of graphology; an analysis of a curious case of mental disease; an interesting experimentation on the maternal instincts of the spider.

*Travail et Plaisir*, par CH. FÉRÉ. Felix Alcan, Paris, 1904. pp. 476.

*Die Konvergenz der Organismen*, von HERMANN FRIEDMANN. Gebürder Paetel, Berlin, 1904. pp. 242.

"Many doctrines, but one truth," is the motto of this attempt to substitute an empirical theory for that of descent. The author discusses ovogenesis, the relations between comparative anatomy and biontotechnik, physiological chemistry, paleontology, development history, the theory of specific inheritance, the principles of homology and analogy, and finally brings these together into a principle of direct convergence. This he illustrates in copious ways, not only in form, but in language, writing, and comparative ethology as well as morphology. In the last chapters he describes the primitive history of mammals, especially man, specific life intensity, and the idea of species as a doctrine of rational organization.

*Where Did Life Begin.* A Monograph. By GILBERT HILTON SCRIBNER. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1903. New Ed. pp. 75.

This monograph was first published in 1883, and the author's conclusions are apparently approved by Professors Wortman and Wieland, of Yale, and it would seem, too, by Professor Asa Gray. The earth cooled down from a molten state slowly, and the poles would therefore first reach a temperature sufficiently cool to permit life. This might occur here when it would have been impossible near the equator. The polar zones led the advance in cooling and have had in turn all the temperatures and climates necessary to maintain both vegetal and animal life. If the first isothermal belt including the highest heat degree in which any life is possible moved southward a mile every thousand years it would take six million years for it to travel from the pole to the equator. The poles cooled first because they had less heat from the sun. Thus, animals and plants slowly migrated southward. This accounts for the fact that a long list of animals are found in the eastern and western hemispheres north of the equator which are closely allied to each other. No indigenous theory will account for this. Moreover, mountains and river beds run predominantly north or south. The traces of this great migration in the southern hemisphere are less conspicuous because of the configuration of the land.

*Wahres und Falsches an Darwins Lehre*, von AUGUST PAULY. Ernst Reinhardt, München, 1902. pp. 18.

*Ants and Some Other Insects*, by AUGUST FOREL. Tr. by William Norton Wheeler. (Religion of Science Library, No. 56.) Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago, 1904. pp. 49.

*Biographic Clinics*, by GEORGE M. GOULD. Vol. II. P. Blakiston's Sons & Co., Philadelphia, 1904. pp. 392.

In this second volume the author takes up the problem of the origin

of the ill health of George Eliot, George Henry Lewes, Wagner, Parkman, Mrs. Carlyle, Spencer, Whittier, Margaret Fuller Ossoli and Nietzsche. It marks a distinct advance upon the book of last year which was devoted to De Quincey, Carlyle, Darwin, Huxley and Browning. The author of this note is not competent to form an opinion of the value of the writer's main contention that most of the ailments of these men were due to eye strain. It seems to him on the contrary that this may be an exaggeration of the kind to which all specialists are probably liable. The neglect of the first volume by some medical journals and the slight or even critical reference to it by others, of which the author has just cause of complaint, is perhaps due to this feeling among his professional brethren. However this may be, Dr. Gould seems to us to have made a very important contribution to the methods of modern biographers. In the future they should certainly take into careful account the health in general if not in detail of the men of whom they write. It is both surprising and pitiful to read the autobiographic record of symptoms and perhaps protracted sufferings by many of these great men and women. Had he waited until its appearance, and then taken account of Herbert Spencer's autobiography, he could have made the chapter devoted to this man very much more pathetic. The question is inevitable whether all of the great workers of the world have been incessantly fighting pain and disease, and the philosophic mind cannot rest short of the further query whether excessive mentation be not itself so unnatural as to be a cause of many of these woes. In our day when hygiene, public, domestic, educational and personal, is coming to play such an important and even central rôle it was high time to look at the lives of the leaders of the race from this view point, and not only the medical profession, but all interested in culture owe to Dr. Gould a debt of gratitude for his painstaking work.

*Die Erregung, Hemmung und Narkose*, von N. E. WEDENSKY. Professor der Physiologie an der Universität der St. Petersburg. Martin Hager, Bonn, 1904. pp. 152.

The present volume, of which a brief notice has already been given in a previous number, states in a concise form the results of a series of experimental researches on the effect of narcotics and various chemical, thermal and electrical stimuli upon a given nerve tract. The chief result of Prof. Wedensky's first research was to confirm the conclusions of Grünhagen and his followers that, in proportion as the poison exerts its influence upon the nerve, the *irritability* of the nerve decreases since increasingly stronger stimuli are necessary to produce the minimal muscular contraction. The *conductivity* on the other hand appears to persist for a longer time, since even minimal electrical stimulations applied to a normal point in the nerve above the narcotized tract are still transmitted through it. An ingenious device by which a telephone was introduced between the narcotized tract and the muscle made possible a series of experiments in which changes in the nerve were indicated by a change of tone in the instrument. With the aid of this apparatus a stage, to which the name Versuchstadium was applied, was discovered in which both weak and strong stimuli were still conducted from the normal point through the narcotized tract although the clear, musical, tone of the telephone had already become dull and confused. From this series of experiments Prof. Wedensky draws two important inferences: (1) that while by the usual method of minimal stimuli the conductivity of the nerve has been regarded as unchanged until its sudden disappearance, it is, in reality, deeply changed before this happens. (2) The narcotized nerve tract, at least in the Versuchstadium must be regarded as in a state of irritability.